



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **CAMP FUNSTON GROWS QUICKLY**

By Mike Heronemus  
Editor

“What I tell you is being planned today will probably be different tomorrow,” emphasized Ted Irwin, chief of the Reserve Component Support Division. “This is a work in progress and things change almost daily,” he said.

Irwin’s temporary office sits in the middle of a massive construction project covering Camp Funston, south of Huebner Road near the Ogden, Kan., gate, with some permanent facilities and a whole lot more “relocatable” structures being put up primarily to house Soldiers coming to Fort Riley for training periods of varying lengths.

Four permanent pre-fabricated billets are well under construction, as are two motor pools. That’s only part of what Fort Riley needs and expects to get eventually to house training Soldiers at Camp Funston, said Mike Goreham, chief of the Master Planning Division, Directorate of Public Works.

Permanent facilities being built now will house about half a battalion of Soldiers, Goreham said. The plan is to have enough permanent structures to house up to three battalions of people. Additional permanent facilities are expected to be funded and come sometime in fiscal year 2008 or 2009, Goreham said.

A battalion set of buildings would include four barracks, a dining facility, a battalion headquarters building, company operations facility, motor pool and quarters to house bachelor officers and enlisted members, Goreham said.

Even with all the permanent structures built, Camp Funston wouldn’t have enough space to handle all the Soldiers expected to live there while training for deployment, so temporary “relocatable” pre-fab buildings are being set up to meet that demand.

Fifty-eight of the rolling buildings (they have wheels on their frames, just as mobile homes do) are ready to be inhabited, Goreham said May 8. More will be placed in Camp Funston to house members of the combat aviation brigade earmarked for location at Marshall Army Airfield, he added.

Even with those structures, billeting will be crowded, Goreham said. Some rooms will have four people and others will have eight. Some buildings have 40-person bays, he explained.

"We're giving them 45 square feet of living space, about what they would have in a forward operating base," Goreham said.

These will be temporary homes for the Soldiers coming to Fort Riley for training, not permanent living areas, he emphasized.

Irwin and his staff historically have coordinated billeting and range use for reserve and National Guard units spending time at Fort Riley, usually during summer training periods in June. That will continue at least through June and July this year, Irwin said.

About 1,145 reserve component Soldiers will train at Fort this year, reported John Bess, who works for Irwin. Before 9-11, Fort Riley hosted from 5,000 to 6,000 reserve component Soldiers for annual training each year, Bess said. That number has been dwindling each year because of the need to mobilize reserve component units for missions relating to the Global War on Terror, he added.

Several of those units need to use Fort Riley ranges for live fire training, including aerial gunnery and Hellfire missiles by the 1st Battalion, 135th Aviation Brigade, and Multiple Launch Rocket Systems by the 2nd Battalion, 130 Field Artillery Brigade.

Irwin said he's not sure whether Fort Riley will be able to support reserve component annual training next year because of the influx of Soldiers comprising new military transition training teams.

Original planning called for the undeveloped areas of Camp Funston to be built up as sort of a "small city for reservists" mobilized and coming to Fort Riley for training and deployment, Irwin said. The slowdown in active duty deployments from Fort Riley to Iraq predicted crowded conditions on Custer Hill, where the RCSD used to operate.

With the December 2005 change in deployment for units of the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, and return of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Armored Division, from Iraq, billeting space became even more crowded.

The post leadership had expected the entire 1st Bde. to deploy in December and planned to move 3rd BCT Soldiers into its vacated billets. A change in the situation in Iraq stopped that deployment in favor of sending smaller units to handle special security force requirements and to conduct military transition training for Coalition security forces.

The original plan for Camp Funston was to construct billets, administration buildings, motor pools and dining facilities to handle three battalions of reserve component Soldiers at one time, Irwin said. That idea went away with the change in the training and mobilization mission.

The post's focus shifted from being a power projection point for thousands of mobilized Soldiers needing to train and prepare for duty in Iraq and Afghanistan each year to training smaller sets of military transition teams, Irwin explained. Those transition teams will form and train at Fort Riley while billeted at Camp Funston, he said.

Although the teams will be composed of a handful of military experts from all U.S. services and from Coalition forces, the large number of teams needed for the transition of the security mission in Iraq and elsewhere will fill Camp Funston constantly from mid-May until some unknown time in the future, Irwin indicated with a chart showing training cycles already planned for several months out.

Camp Funston already houses about 200 Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade, 91st Division (Training Support), who came from Fort Carson, Colo., to train Fort Riley cadre how to train the incoming transition teams. The 2nd Bde., 91st Div., already trains transition teams at Fort Carson.

To accommodate the Soldiers being trained, Camp Funston will have its own dining facility. Plans are to open it for dining in May, but the meals will be prepared elsewhere and carried to the Camp Funston facility in containers for serving. The Camp Funston facility should be ready to prepare its own meals in June, Irwin said.

Other amenities will be sparse, Irwin predicted. No recreation outlets are being planned and cable television is not available at Camp Funston. "There isn't even a pool table," Irwin said. Televisions and pool tables would normally be placed in company administration buildings in what are referred to as dayrooms. No company administration space will be available, he said, because it's all being turned into administrative offices for the necessary support functions.

Shuttle buses will be provided to carry Soldiers to places they must go on post, but the extras at Camp Funston will be minimal, he repeated. The PX has moved in a couple of trailers that will be stocked with items similar to what can be found in small shoppettes, Irwin said, but "the plan is not to man those until we have a lot of people here."

Some other concerns about housing large numbers of Soldiers at Camp Funston have already been addressed, Goreham said.

Concrete culverts have been placed in front of each "relocatable" building as a tornado shelter. Projections have shown they would be too heavy for a tornado to lift and move, Goreham said, so the main concern was to provide the Soldiers a place to be protected from flying debris.

A new waste water pump station is being installed to replace a smaller one already at Camp Funston. When the new pump is in service, it will handle twice the amount of waste water the old pump handles, Goreham said.

Flooding isn't a major concern, he added. The area, like Camp Forsyth, is protected by a levee, so "when we talk flooding, we're talking about closing the flood gates (in the levee), and that causes water to back up," Goreham explained. "Camp Funston escaped flooding in the 1993 flood that affected Camp Forsyth," he said.

Power already meets expected needs, Goreham said. The post got an upgraded substation in 1992-93.